Resilient Islam meets a Resistant Mainstream: Persistent "Barriers" in Public Attitudes over Religious Rights for Muslims in European countries

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In Europe, over the last two decades, the distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims has become the most significant form of demarcation in public debates and policies for minority politics (Koopmans 2013). Questions over whether Islam is compatible with liberal democratic values and societies, and by implication whether a significant presence of Muslim minorities is "problematic" resonate strongly. There are intense discussions over whether the supposed or real cultural/religious characteristics of Muslims impede integration in their own right, independently from socio-economic factors (Statham and Tillie 2016). Atrocities by perpetrators acting in the name of "Islamic state" are depressingly common across the continent, often committed by second-generation Muslims born in Europe. This has led to increasing political demands for Muslims to identify with their countries of settlement and accept so-called "core" liberal-democratic values in the domains of democracy, separation of church and state, and gender equality. However, barriers to peaceful co-existence and social cohesion also result from a lack of acceptance of cultural/religious differences among significant parts of the majority population. Such majority opposition can range from tacit avoidance of Muslims in everyday life to outright hostility and Islamophobia.

In a volume on how Muslims of immigrant origin and their offspring fare in their societies of settlement, this chapter addresses questions of their acculturation as well as resistance to this from majority populations. We are specifically interested in the strength of "symbolic barriers" between Muslims and majorities that indicate a *socio-cultural distance* between

them over the presence of Islam as a minority religion. We think that how Muslims of immigrant origin are perceived by the majority, and how they see themselves being accepted, or not, will importantly shape their individual life chances, and also their trajectory for social integration as a group in their societies of settlement.

Even in largely secular European societies, resonant public conflicts over cultural/religious difference matter because they mark all Muslims out as a single group and reify their supposed characteristics as a "problem" for liberal societies, regardless of which generation they come from, their family country of origin, and degree of religiosity. Viewed from the perspective of Muslims, however, the expression of Islamic belief is not a "homeland hangover", but increasingly a source of identification for second and third generations, who attempt to find a place between their parents' culture and rejection in their country of birth. Higher religiosity among second generation Muslims than their peers is not only a revival of faith, but a reaction to the opposition and discrimination they face – "reactive religiosity" (Connor 2010). Demands by the children of immigrants for religious rights and cultural recognition are stronger than those of their parents' generation. In Europe, research shows that Muslims make most public demands for minority groups rights, and that public debates about groups rights are mostly about the accommodation of Islam (Koopmans et al. 2005).

While Europe's relation to her Muslim immigrants is distinct from the U.S. experience (Alba and Foner 2015), we still consider that the important variations between European countries merit investigation, given that they have different institutional approaches for extending rights to Muslims, based on their specific church-state relations and minority politics (Koopmans et al. 2005). Cross-national variations in the legal and institutional incorporation of Islam in Europe are well established (Fetzer and Soper 2005). The main question is

whether religion is a bridge or a barrier to minority integration (Foner and Alba 2008)? While most scholars see Islam as a barrier in Europe, there are disagreements about the provenance and strength of this barrier. Some argue Islam is a resilient barrier to adaption because European societal institutions and national identities remain significantly anchored in Christianity and do not make equal room for Islam (Zolberg and Woon 1999; Foner and Alba 2008). Against this, Joppke (2009) argues that European liberal nation-states have importantly extended Muslim group rights, precisely because their legal and constitutional institutions uphold liberal norms, often in the face of public opposition. In this view, public sentiments should not be confused with public institutions, which due to the prevalence of liberal norms cannot operate unchallenged on an ethnocentric basis, so that: "religion, particularly Islam, may still be more "barrier" than "bridge" to including immigrants in Europe but only as a matter of mentalities, not of institutions." (Joppke and Torpey 2013, 141–142).

So far, however, there has been very little research on these public "mentalities" that build the barriers between Muslims and majorities, and how these relate to state approaches in their respective societies. This study compares Britain, Germany, France, and the Netherlands: countries with the most sizeable Muslim populations of immigrant origin in Western Europe (Buijs and Rath 2002; Alba and Foner 2015) and distinctive policy approaches for Islam (Koenig 2007). We examine public opinions on the place of Islam in state schooling, a field where the outcomes of controversies will clearly shape the socialization processes of the next generations. Our primary analysis is over whether teachers should be allowed to wear (Christian and Islamic) religious symbols in schools, and whether religious classes should be allowed for Christians and Muslims.

Schooling is an important domain to examine Muslim inclusion, because this is where the state acts in attempting to socialize the next generations into the values, identities and ideas of who belongs to the national community (Gellner 1983). Schools are especially important for the children of immigrants, not only because of the importance of educational attainment to achieving upward social mobility, but because this is their first formative lived experience of engagement with the state and how the state addresses issues of minority needs and discrimination in society. For the second generation, whether provisions are made for practicing Islam on the same basis as other minority or majority religions in schools, demonstrates the state's degree of formal inclusion of their faith. However, regardless of the degree of formal inclusion of provisions for Islam, or not, within the curriculum, it also matters whether this is controversial, and the degree of opposition that it faces from the majority population, because this will shape the second generation's feelings and experiences of belonging to the community. By examining the strength of barriers to religious rights for Muslims in public attitudes, we gain insight into whether cultural/religious difference is a special additional barrier to integration that confronts Muslims of immigrant origin in Europe.

Multiculturalism and the Challenge of Islamic Rights to Liberal Democracies

In contrast to the prevalence of race in the U.S., public controversies over multiculturalism in Europe are dominated by questions over the extension of rights to Muslims. But what is the substance of these claims and counter-claims? The label multiculturalism is often used loosely to refer to any cultural diversity (Koopmans 2013). It is more useful to apply a narrower definition as group specific rights, exemptions and recognition for minorities. Here minority 'group rights' exhibit two features: first, if granted, group rights go beyond the set of common civil and political rights of individual citizenship protected in all liberal

democracies; second, if realised, group rights constitute the recognition and accommodation by the state of the distinctive identity and cultural needs of the minority (Statham et al. 2005). Examples include policies allowing exemptions from rules and obligations, state support for separate institutions, special facilities in public institutions such as schools and media, representation rights for ethnic/religious organisations, and affirmative action. Of course, group claims are made by a wide range of ethnic, national and racial minorities, but our focus is on those for differential treatment in the name of religion. We use Carol and Koopmans' definition (2013, 166-7): "Claims about religious rights then contest entitlements regarding the performance (e.g. to be buried according to Islamic prescriptions) or non-performance (e.g. dispensation from mixed swimming classes) of certain actions for religious reasons, or they are about entitlements that require others to perform (e.g. to create prayer spaces in schools) or refrain from performing (e.g. not to depict the Prophet Mohammed) certain actions for religious reasons."

Regarding the supposed challenge of religious demands by Muslims, a first point is that the idea of a unitary citizenship based on equal individual rights on which liberalism rests is an ideology, not an accurate depiction for most liberal nation-states. Most states already attribute some group rights and privileges in the form of corporatist or federal arrangements, and importantly –as we show shortly- give preferential treatment to specific religions over others.

While some Muslim group demands are for parity with other religious groups, others go further, requesting exceptional treatment. Exceptional demands are not easy to accommodate, when they challenge the very essence of liberal values. For example, Muslims who practice polygamy, female circumcision, or *Sharia* divorce, are committing acts that contradict most liberal states' legal and moral understandings of individual equality between men and women. How common or representative such practices are is not clear. We suspect they are

not very common at all, though when they occur, they gain a disproportionately high resonance from a mainstream media keen to comment on the novelty of this cultural difference of immigrants.

Also the global Islamic upsurge is not only a political movement, but a revival of commitments with explicitly religious underpinnings (Berger, 1999). It involves a restoration of Islamic beliefs and lifestyles based on ideas about religion and the state, women, and the moral codes of everyday behaviour, which often contradict the modern ideas of European liberal states. Islam is not just a "homeland hangover" brought by immigrants, but a source of identification for second and third generations, who attempt to find a place between their parents' culture and rejection in their country of birth. Many who wear the dress and accoutrements of Islam are educated professionals, the sons and daughters of assimilated immigrants. This revival of Islam is "Made in Europe" - a combination of the second generation's faith, reactions to difficult integration processes, and perceived hostility.

Although played out through symbols, such as headscarves and minarets, conflicts over Islam are also about the distribution of material resources. Migrants' religious demands in public education or welfare, where the state is responsible for distributing services, challenge a pre-existing institutionalized context in which the majority white population has real stakes too. This is why cultural conflicts often take place in public institutional settings where the state balances its obligations for minority provision against the pressures and possible political backlash of majority demands. A large proportion of the resonance over Islamic group demands actually comes in the form of reactions by representatives of the majority public. While some politicians are sincere in upholding what they see as liberal principles, this often leads to ethno-nationalist claims, where issues become distorted under emotive rhetoric about assumed national values and identities that "other" Muslims in the public domain.

In sum, religion matters a great deal in understanding European controversies over Muslims. First, although European societies are mostly secular, Christian religions play influential institutional social and political roles, irrespective of the small number of practicing worshippers. These church/state relations define the political environment into which immigrant religions have to negotiate a space for their community. Second, religious identification is a belief system that can shape an individual's core identity and behaviour. A religious migrant may consider practicing religion a sacred duty that cannot be compromised. While states consciously try to shape migrants' civic attitudes through integration policies, they do not to the same degree for religious faith, not least because liberal states uphold freedom of religious practice. Third, the nature of the immigrant religion influences how migrants can adapt when faced by the dominant culture. In this respect, the public duties of worship associated with Islam can be more obtrusive within the European societies, than those of immigrant minority religions, such as Hinduism, where worship takes place in a way that is less publicly visible.

Variations in the State Accommodation of Islam

The sizeable literature on cross-national variations emphasizes how historical resolutions of church-state conflicts have shaped the accommodation of Islam as a minority religion in Europe (Fetzer and Soper 2005; Statham et al. 2005; Koenig 2007; Soper and Fetzer 2007; Laurence 2012). There is considerable agreement on prominent features that define church/state separations. France, the Netherlands, Britain and Germany represent four distinct institutional types of religious accommodation, here understood as "opportunity structures" (Koopmans and Statham 2000), that importantly influence the degree and form to which Islam has been incorporated through an extension of rights to Muslims. We examine how distinct approaches to the accommodation of religious rights relate to patterns of public

attitudes (between Muslim minorities and Majorities) by using individual level data. This matters because, so far, there has been little comparative empirical research on whether public attitudes reflect the institutional degree of accommodation of Islam, or not. We present the basic cross-national variations in our countries' traditions for church/state relations, to provide context for the subsequent analyses.

France, under the concept of *laïcité*, is the archetypal secularist case, where there is a strict church-state separation that provides little space for religion in public life and institutions. The French state and public institutions are committed to secularism and even the role of Christian churches is restricted in the public sphere. As a consequence of *laïcité*, the French state has been resistant to the idea of separate institutions, such as schools, for religious groups, and displays of religiosity in public environments. In France there is a broad consensus that civil servants should not display visible markers of religion. In a context where even Catholic institutions, such as schools, receive far less state support and recognition than elsewhere, Islam has faced difficulties in finding an institutional foothold within a restrictive state framework (Laurence 2012).

The Dutch case stands in stark contrast to French *laïcité*. In the Netherlands church/state relations evolved around the logic of "pillarisation" as a consequence of ideological struggles between Catholic, Protestant and secular groups in the late nineteenth century. Pillarisation entails a denominational segregation of society where religious or ideological groups have the right to establish their own social infrastructure with state support. Hence Dutch church-state relations follow a tradition for: non-interference of the state in religious self-governance, which was broadly defined to include religious schools, hospitals, cultural and welfare institutions, and a range of other sectors. The compromise also entailed full state funding—on

an equal basis for all denominations—for these sectors (Koopmans 2013). Although actual pillarisation died out in the 1960s, its imprint is still influential as a logic embedded in institutional arrangements and law, and served as a reference point for how to accommodate Muslim rights (Carol and Koopmans 2013). In this context, Muslims and other newcomer religious minorities have found it relatively easy to claim group rights granted to other religious denominations, while the state has traditionally refrained from preventing the expression of minority religions in public institutions.

Britain has an official state Christian church that is privileged over others. The Church of England is led by the Queen, as Head of State, while more than 20 Anglican Bishops sit in the second chamber. In Britain, the privileges that the state grants the Church of England are not automatically extended to other religious groups. Nonetheless, a pragmatic form of accommodation has proceeded, with the state relatively willing to grant rights to newer religions, a process supported in a paternalistic way by the Church of England. As Soper and Fetzer (2007, 936) state: "importantly, the presence of an established church and its close links with politics and public policy in Britain encouraged Muslim groups to look to the state for recognition of their religious rights and public policy needs.". Overall, this has provided a considerable degree of parity between religions over time, while elites have been relatively supportive of demands to extend rights to Muslims on an equal basis to other minority religions, though full parity has not been achieved (Fetzer and Soper 2005; Statham et al. 2005).

In Germany, state recognition is extended to several Christian (especially Catholic) and Jewish religious denominations as public corporations, a formal status that entails privileges, including to receive Church taxes collected by the government, organise religious education

in state schools, and provide social welfare services (Soper and Fetzer 2007). Crucially, the German state has so far not been willing to extend the public corporation status to Islam that it has afforded the Christian and Jewish denominations. This requirement for formal status has proven to be a barrier that has made it relatively difficult for Muslims to gain group rights (Laurence 2012). In addition, a strong imprint of Christianity remains in German liberalism that has been less accommodating than the establishment Church variant in Britain. Joppke (2009, 123) makes this point in his analysis of the legal basis of German headscarf bans: "This is a case where Muslims are really excluded from a certain 'Christian-occidental' self-definition of the state, simply because one cannot be Christian and Muslim at the same time. This is the identity that transpires in the headscarf laws of the Catholic-conservative Länder." Another factor in Germany is the difficulty for migrant minorities to gain access to formal citizenship relative to France, Britain and the Netherlands (Koopmans et al. 2005). Muslims of immigrant origin are less able to demand parity of treatment to others when significant numbers of them remain formally non-nationals and lacking in political leverage.

Comparatively, the Dutch and the British church-state traditions have been more open to accommodating Islam as a new minority religion. In particular, the Dutch form of group-based pluralism inherited from pillarisation allows a greater and relatively equal recognition of minority religions and favourable opportunities for Muslims to stake their group claims. Britain's relative openness and accommodating approach is more elite-led and top-down with the aim of avoiding conflict with religious minorities. The Church of England has importantly supported Muslim rights, but retains its position at the top of the hierarchy. In Germany, a combination of high formal barriers to state recognition and status and relatively low political influence due to high barriers for migrant populations to gain access to citizenship is not conducive for Muslims. While in France, Muslims face very high barriers to

religious rights, not least because even Christian churches have historically been denied many privileges and rights within a context of strict state secularism.

There are two important dimensions of variation: the degree to which Muslim group rights are accommodated; and the degree to which Christian religions are privileged over others. First, the Netherlands and Britain have been relatively much more accommodating to Muslim group demands than France and Germany. Second, in Britain and Germany, Christian churches are substantially privileged relative to other religions. By comparison, the Netherlands and France treat religions in a relatively more equal way, notwithstanding that the Dutch are relatively inclusive, and the French exclusive.

Approach, method and data[i]

We use data from an original survey conducted within a EU Framework project *EurIslam*[ii] (Statham and Tillie 2016). The data were collected through Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) in 2010/2011. The survey oversamples people with a migrant background and includes more than 5000 respondents. In each country, we interviewed migrant minorities from four important Muslim-origin countries (former-Yugoslavia; Turkey; Pakistan; Morocco). This "Muslim" sample was drawn by onomastic procedure: common family and first names were sampled from the latest electronic phonebooks. Respondents were screened to see if they, or one of their parents, were Muslims, and from our selected countries of origin. Bi-lingual interviewers were used allowing respondents to choose their preferred language. In addition, we collected a Majority (non-Muslim) sample randomly in each country. Efforts were made to ensure gender balance in all samples. Table 1 shows the samples.

-Table 1 about here-

From the survey, we selected questions relating to an extension of religious rights in state schools: (1) allowing religious symbols on schoolteachers' clothing and (2) the provision of religious in the school curriculum. For both we can compare responses about religious rights for Christianity and Islam.

We compare variations between groups within a country, instead of groups regardless of country. Because our respondents live in distinct national, legal, policy and interpretative contexts for understanding religious rights, their opinions (for or against religious rights) mean something substantively different dependent on their respective national country context. A respondent living in Britain, whose child goes to a school where a teacher wears a religious headscarf, and is institutionally and legally empowered to do so, is clearly relating to a different interpretive and institutional world than one in France, where this would be inconceivable and legally impossible. The normal in Britain and France is very different precisely because of their distinct state approaches to Islam and Christianity. The scales for agreement/disagreement in our survey are therefore best employed to measure relative differences between individuals (from majority and minority groups) *within a country*.

We also try to avoid the pitfall of lumping all Muslims together, by allowing for examination of differences between Muslims with backgrounds in four countries of origin (former-Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Morocco and Turkey).

Allowing teachers to wear religious symbols in schools?

Historically, states use education systems as an important nation-building tool. Schools are important agents for socializing the next generations into the values, identities and ideas of who belongs to a national community (Gellner 1983). This is why schools have regularly been the institutional location for public and legal disputes over the place of religion in society, generally, and specifically over Islam. Conflicts over whether pupils or teachers can wear veils or crucifixes in a state school are common. Teachers perform a special role in schools as public servants acting on behalf of, and as employees of, the state. Hence whether teachers are banned from wearing religious symbols in their professional role is a good indicator for a state's accommodation of a religion.

Regarding actual situations, we find variations: In 2008, no religious symbols were allowed in French primary and secondary schools. Britain and the Netherlands were more accommodating. Teachers were permitted to wear the Islamic veil, while Christian religious symbols were already accepted in state education. In Germany, Christianity was strongly present in education, while teachers were banned from wearing the veil in some Laender, although the Federal Court ruled there was no clear legal basis for this in 2003 (ICRI).

We have two questions on teachers' attire and religious symbols: one on Christian symbols and clothing, and one on the Islamic veil. This allows us to compare respondents' opinions over provision for the majority religion and Islam.

Our survey asks:

'Several aspects of state-religion relations have recently been under discussion in <France/Germany/the Netherlands/the UK>. Do you agree or disagree with the following

statements?

(a) Teachers in public schools should not be allowed to wear visible Christian symbols such as a cross or a nun's habit.

(b) Teachers in public schools should not be allowed to wear a Veil.'

(order of questions randomised)

The tables show the main findings.[iii] Scores show the adjusted means for a group's responses on a four-point scale after controlling for age, educational level and income. Note that the questions are worded negatively, so agreement indicates an opinion against religious symbols. However, we adjusted the data, so that a mean above 2.5 moving towards 4 indicates increasing disagreement with an extension of religious rights, and below 2.5 towards 1, increasing agreement. The columns show the results within each country. The Majority row gives the adjusted mean score for the non-Muslim sample. The subsequent four rows show adjusted means for the four Muslim groups (ex-Yugoslavian; Pakistani; Moroccan; Turkish), respectively. The * symbol shows when this opinion is highly significantly different from the majority opinion (at **p < .01, *** p < .001). The "Muslim" mean is a score calculated from the means of the four Muslim groups (weighted) per country. Last, the Majority/Muslim gap shows the distance between the majority and Muslim means.

-Tables 2a and 2b-

Table 2a shows findings on teachers wearing symbols associated with the majority Christian religions. First, we see the strong imprint of *laïcité* in the French majority and Muslim minority relative to those in other countries. The French majority respondents have the strongest disagreement with teachers being allowed to wear Christian symbols of all groups,

and are the only group apart from Moroccan Muslims in France, and former-Yugoslavian Muslims in Britain, who register on the disagreement side of the scale. By contrast, in countries where the state incorporates Christian religions to a greater degree, and allows teachers to wear clothes signifying Christianity, respondents from the majority are clearly against banning Christian symbols. This applies to the Netherlands, but to a greater degree to Germany, and especially Britain, the two countries where the state significantly privileges Christian religions.

Second, turning to Muslim respondents, their overall positions in countries where the state incorporates Christianity, the Netherlands, Britain, and Germany, "agree" with permitting Christian symbols for teachers' attire. This Muslim support for Christian symbols in state schools is most likely because Muslims understand that an expansion of rights for Islam is often best legitimated by a demand for parity with the majority religion. It is harder for liberal states to deny rights to some that that are already extended to others (Joppke 2009). Even in *laïc* France, the overall Muslim mean is equivalent to neutral, showing neither support nor opposition to Christianity in schools in a context where it is denied. So overall, we witness no Muslim opposition to the actual (or in France possible) state accommodation of Christianity in this form. This goes against the idea of a "Christianity versus Islam" boundary along religious divisions driven and constructed by Muslim minorities. On the contrary, Muslims' relative support for Christian religious rights is indicative of a more pragmatic approach to their own religious accommodation. Regarding the gaps between the majority and Muslim minorities over Christian group rights, it is only in France that Christianity in schools clearly divides the majority and all four resident Muslim minority groups. Here the strong imprint of *laïcité* in the French majority's opinions, who on aggregate "disagree" with teachers wearing

Christian symbols in schools, means that former-Yugoslavs, Pakistanis and Turks are highly significantly different from the majority, while Moroccans just miss significance.

However, when we turn to opinions over teachers wearing the Muslim veil, we see from Table 2b that there is a clear dividing line between the majority population and Muslim minorities in all four countries. The opinions of all four groups of Muslim origin in all four countries of settlement are highly significantly different from the majority view, with the exception of former-Yugoslavians in the Netherlands and Germany. Among Muslims, we see that those who most likely came as refugees from the ethno-religious wars that tore Yugoslavia apart, tend to be less in favour of religious rights, than Muslims with origins in Pakistan, Morocco and Turkey.

By comparing Tables 2a and 2b, we can unpack some important features of the changes in opinion that occur as the question shifts from group rights for Christians to Muslims. First, the overall aggregate Muslim means are remarkably similar for teachers' wearing Christian or Islamic symbols across all countries. This shows that Muslims agree to accommodating religious symbols in state schools for their own and the majority Christian religions to the same degree. Again, we think that this similar level of support for their own minority religion and Christianity comes from the importance of demanding parity with a majority religion for advancing Muslim group rights. However, it demonstrates a second important feature of the significant gap between the majority and Muslims over teachers wearing the veil, namely, that it is produced by a change in the opinions of respondents from the majority populations as the question shifts from Christian to Muslim rights. It is the majority populations' opposition to the veil that drives the relationship and produces the significant gaps. Only in the Netherlands where teachers can wear the Islamic headscarf does the majority remain

neutral overall, while in Germany, and especially in France and Britain, the majority agrees strongly with banning teachers from wearing the veil. This may not be a surprise for the France, where the veil is banned for teachers, nor Germany where there is a mixed policy, but where again the veil is banned in some Federal States. However, the British majority's very strong opposition is exceptional in that it goes directly against the country's policies for not banning teachers from wearing the veil.

Here it is worth pointing out that the shift in majority opinions when the question moves from Christian to Muslim rights is largest in Britain, and then Germany, compared to the Netherlands and France. Britain and Germany are the two countries whose church-state accommodations especially privilege Christian religions over other religions, while the Netherlands is relatively more equally accommodating to all religions, and France equally unaccommodating to all. From this, it seems that granting special privileges to Christian religions over others provides legitimacy for majorities to also discriminate in their views and support provision for Christians, but not Muslims. For Britain, the argument is that maintaining the status of a privileged state Church, the Church of England, does more to uphold a sense of Christian privilege in the minds of the majority than the extension of Muslim group rights does to undermine it. The British majority clearly agree with teachers being allowed to wear Christian symbols and attire, but disagree strongly with an extension of this right to Muslims, even though this is what actually happens. In Germany, where Muslims communities have less of a foothold in society, generally, because of restrictive citizenship, and Christian churches are clearly granted privileges that are not extended to Islam, this discriminating stance of the majority in prioritising Christian rights is less surprising.

In sum, the British findings are especially striking. The British majority's strong agreement with banning teachers from wearing the veil produces a large gap between Muslims and non-Muslims that is almost twice the size of that in France, where the *laïcité* conditions make teachers wearing a veil an absolute non-starter.

Allowing Religious Education in schools?

Another query to test opinions on whether group rights should be included within state provision addresses religious education (RE) in state schooling. We replicate the design applied for teachers' clothing and religious symbols and ask questions that allow comparison between provision for Christian and Islamic religions. In part, this is to verify our earlier findings, given that references to the veil might provoke atypical emotive responses from respondents, or that the negative wording of the question might produce distorting effects. Our focus on the place of majority and minority religions in the curriculum of state education goes to the core of questions about the public and institutional incorporation of religion, not least because it is through their education systems that states seek to generate their preferred values and national identities.

With regard to the factual state of affairs facing our respondents, in 2008, Britain, the Netherlands and Germany allowed provision for Christian RE but had not extended this to Islamic RE on an equal basis. In Britain, parents were able to request that local councils on religious education install Islamic classes. This led to some state schools offering Islamic RE in areas with dense Muslim populations. Similarly, in the Netherlands, there is a partial form of acceptance. In Germany, there had been only very few pilot projects for Islamic RE classes by 2008, due to the subordinate position of Islam relative to the Christianity in the state's

hierarchy of religious recognition. In France, the exclusion of religious instruction from state schooling meant that provision for Islam was a non-starter (ICRI).

The survey asks whether respondents agree or disagree with two statements:
(a) Public schools should offer Christian religious education for those who want it.
(b) Public schools should offer Muslim religious education for those who want it.
(order of questions randomised)

Table 3a shows the adjusted means for groups' opinions over Christian RE in state schools. In line with the findings on religious attire, the main dividing line is between *laïc* France and the three countries where state education includes Christian Churches to a greater degree. First, the impact of *laïcité* is clear on the French majority's opinions, they are the only group who on aggregate "disagree" with Christian RE for those who want it. By contrast, all four groups of Muslim origin in France agree with the proposition to a degree that is highly significantly different from the majority. This produces a gap between the French majority and Muslims that is significantly wider than in the Netherlands, Britain, and Germany, where there is a relative majority and Muslim consensus in favour of this right for Christians. Support for Christian religious instruction in schools is especially strong among the German majority. But it is also evident for the British majority, who like their German counterparts live in a country where the state especially privileges Christian religions over others. In the Netherlands, where religious accommodation is relatively more equal across different religions, the Dutch majority on aggregate favours Christian RE, but less decisively. Turning to the Muslim aggregate means, we see that in all countries Muslims broadly "agree" with Christian RE provision. This confirms the earlier finding that Muslims tend to support Christian rights, probably thinking that this is more conducive for a spill over of rights to

their own religion. Again, this indicates a pragmatic stance, with no evidence of a sizable Muslim opposition to Christianity simply because it is a different religion. When the question shifts to state provision of RE for Muslims (Table 3b), we also find a similar overall pattern to the earlier findings on teachers' wearing religious attire. First, there are clearly divided opinions in all countries between the majority and Muslims. With the exception of former-Yugoslavs in the Netherlands, all groups with Muslim origins in all countries are highly significantly different in their views to the majority, and more in agreement with allowing Islamic RE.

-Tables 3a and 3b-

Once more we see that Muslims in the Netherlands, France and Germany, hold similar views on RE provision for Christians and Muslims. It is only in Britain where Muslims shift in their views to be more in agreement with this right for themselves than for Christians. Also, among the Muslims groups, the former-Yugoslavs are relatively less in favor of this Muslim group right than the others, but with the exception of the Netherlands, much closer to the Pakistani, Moroccan and Turkish groups than the majority.

Again following the pattern that we observed earlier, it is the majority groups' relative shift in opinion against provision for Muslims compared to Christians that leads to important 'gaps' between the majority population and Muslims. Also this shift in majority opinions is greatest in Britain and Germany, the two countries that privilege Christian religions in their state accommodation over other religions. The shift is less pronounced in the Netherlands, where state accommodation generally treats religions more equally, and France, where they are all relatively equally excluded.

The overall findings bear some imprints of the countries' respective forms of church-state accommodation. French majority-supported state *laïcité* leads to a wide Majority/Muslim gap (1.01) and few prospects for an extension of religious rights to Muslims. The French majority are unlikely to support rights for Muslims that are denied to Christians. In the Netherlands, where the state treats religions relatively equally and RE for Muslims is partially accommodated, the Majority/Muslim gap (0.37) remains significant, but is the smallest of the four countries. In Germany, state inclusion of (especially) Christian religions but not Islam, leads to an overall strong majority support for religious provision compared to other countries, but also a relatively strong reaction by the majority against specific provision for Muslims (German gap: 0.46). We also see a similarly strong reaction by the British majority respondents when the question switches from provision for Christians to Muslims. In the British case, this is supplemented by an assertiveness of Muslims for an extension of rights to them relative to Christians.

The British findings are remarkable. For a country with some degree of state accommodation for religious classes for Muslims, it is striking that the British majority shows a clear opposition to this policy and makes a very clear distinction in its support for Christian rights and opposition to extending the same rights for Muslims. Conversely, British Muslims support Christian rights, but advocate support for their own religious rights to a greater degree, no doubt encouraged to expect parity from an institutional system that goes a long way to providing it on many issues. As a consequence, we witness a polarization between the opinions of the majority and Muslims in Britain as the question shifts from Christian to Muslim provision. This results in a striking gap (1.06) along ethno-religious lines between the British Muslims and non-Muslims, driven from both sides. It shows a wide socio-cultural

distance in the views of ordinary people and a potential for conflict between the British majority and Muslims over Islamic group rights.

Conclusion and Discussion

Overall, regardless of the degree to which states accommodate Islam, we find highly significant "barriers" between majority populations and Muslims over what the provision for religious rights for Muslims should be in all four countries. While earlier comparative studies found that institutional approaches to minority integration and cultural pluralism importantly shape the field of public claims-making mobilized by collective actors and carried by mass media (Koopmans et al. 2005), our key finding shows the relationship holds much less with regard to public attitudes. While findings on the Netherlands, Germany and France, support "opportunity structure" expectations to some degree, the British findings completely contradict the notion that accommodating policies lead to closer opinions between the majorities and Muslims. Britain is relatively accommodating towards Islam, but this combines with a majority public opinion that strongly opposes Muslim rights and produces the highest "barriers" of socio-cultural distance.

Decades on from the first immigration waves we see relatively few signs of the cultural acceptance of Islam as a minority religion, at least when judged by public attitudes. Religious faith seems to be a particularly resilient form of Muslim identification in Europe, and at the same, this provokes strong reactions and resistance from largely secular majorities.

Religion matters for majorities even in secular Europe. A striking finding is that majorities' opinions turn against religious rights as the demand shifts from provision for Christians to

Muslims. This shift drives the relationship and results in highly significant socio-cultural distances. We also found that the shift in majority opinions for supporting Christian versus Islam provision was greatest in Britain and Germany, the two countries where states clearly prioritize Christian religions above others. The shift was markedly less in Netherlands, which is relatively more accommodating across religions, and France that is restrictive to all. This is not to suggest that people in Britain and Germany see themselves as more Christian, but that they find greater legitimacy for placing Christianity over Islam and in doing so they repeat the discrimination within their country's approach to religious accommodation. For Britain, it seems that maintaining the status of a privileged state church, the Church of England, does more to uphold a sense of Christian privilege in the minds of the majority than the extension of Muslim group rights does to undermine it. Overall, majority opinions matter a great deal in determining the potential for controversy over Muslim religious rights.

The strength of British majority opposition to Muslim group rights is exceptional. This large gap between supportive policies and oppositional majority public attitudes raises a number of issues. It underlines that a liberal state's institutional approach towards Islam is clearly distinct from public sentiments about Islam. The two should not be conflated, because relatively liberal policies can be out of synch with oppositional public attitudes. This occurs when liberal states place obligations for protecting the cultural needs of (permanent) minorities over the popular majority view. It supports the view of Joppke and Torpey (2013) mentioned in the introduction. However, Joppke and Torpey underestimate the degree to which a state's ability to do this over the long term is restricted by majoritarian politics. What we see in the UK is a significant opposition to Muslim religious rights that also constitutes a potential for politicians to seek votes by mobilizing populist anti-Muslim sentiments. A rise of ethno-nationalist populist politics that targets Islam, not only impacts negatively on (all,

not just religious) Muslims by stigmatization, but it also politically challenges the ability of a liberal state to live up to its ideals and support extensions of group rights to a minority religion.

From the majority side, the difference of Islam as a religion and associated assumptions about cultural characteristics of Muslims have become an interpretive masterframe in the public domain for "explaining" problems of social integration. Such cultural "explanations" that simply lump all Muslims together as the same, regardless of immigration type, country of origin, faith, and degree of individual religiosity, etc., build a strong "barrier" that must be hard for individuals to break out from in the social world. Populist politicians reinforce these barriers, when they "explain" complex social integration problems by the "unwillingness of Muslims to assimilate" or "incompatibility of Islam and liberal democracy". The power of populism is that it provides simple answers for complex social issues by blaming the cultural characteristics of an outgroup.

Religious faith clearly matters for Muslims. However, our findings point towards Muslims making religious demands on a pragmatic and not a religious anti-Christian basis. Muslims supported religious rights for Christians within state education too. It seems that they see better opportunities to advance Islamic rights through a context that supports all religious rights.

Most evidence indicates religiosity has not decreased among the second generation. But the Islam that remains resilient in Europe is different from that which came with the first immigration waves. It is "Made in Europe" and generated by living with rejection, while being stimulated by a global Islamic revival of commitments that have explicitly religious

underpinnings. According to our findings, second-generation Muslims in Europe face at best a lack of support and at worst outright opposition from the majority over practising their faith requirements. In some cases, the state has accommodated such practices, perhaps in the face of a lack of tolerance from the majority population. However, controversies in important socializing public institutions, such as state schools, must have had an impact on the second generation and their acculturation trajectory. The strong symbolic "barrier" that demarcates non-Muslims from Muslims in the social world marks them all out as "culturally different" irrespective of their individual trajectories of social integration in higher education or the labor market. In this sense, culture and religion matters a great deal in shaping life chances for Muslims, even in European societies that are largely secular. This is also a situation that against the linear expectations of classic assimilation theories the passage of time does not seem to erode, but reinforce. The "barriers" are strong, persistent and enduring.

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Table 1: Sample of Respondents

	Netherlands	Britain	France	Germany
Majority	385	385	385	390
Ex-Yugoslav	151	200	150	255
Turkish	250	350	250	355
Moroccan	250	200	250	256
Pakistani	152	350	150	162
Total (n)	1188	1485	1185	1418

Table 2. Agreement/Disagreement with teachers being allowed to wear (a) visible Christian symbols, and (b) (Islamic) Veil, by group

(scale 1-4: agree strongly 1; agree 2; disagree 3; disagree strongly 4)

2a. Christian symbols	**Netherlands** Mean	**Britain** Mean	**France** Mean	**Germany** Mean
Majority	**2.30**	**1.90**	**2.93**	**2.23**
Ex-Yugo	2.20	2.69***	2.45***	2.30
Pakistani	2.09	2.01	2.36***	2.06
Moroccan	1.80***	2.05	2.60	2.03
Turkish	2.19	2.40***	2.53**	2.41
"Muslim"	**2.07**	**2.29**	**2.48**	**2.20**
Majority/ Muslim Gap	**0.23**	**0.39**	**0.45**	**0.03**

2b. Islamic Veil	**Netherlands** Mean	**Britain** Mean	**France** Mean	**Germany** Mean
Majority	**2.48**	**3.64**	**3.16**	**2.76**
Ex-Yugo	2.32	2.52***	2.73**	2.62
Pakistani	2.02***	2.33***	2.35***	1.93***
Moroccan	1.73***	2.14***	2.34***	2.10***
Turkish	2.14***	2.31***	2.37***	2.25***
"Muslim"	**2.05**	**2.33**	**2.45**	**2.23**
Majority/ Muslim Gap	**0.43**	**1.31**	**0.71**	**0.53**

(Group significantly different from Majority at *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, *** $p < .001$ – Bonferroni pairwise comparison – shown only for subcategories of "Muslim" by family country of origin)

Table 3: Agreement/Disagreement with schools offering (a) Christian religious education, and (b) Muslim religious education, to those who want it, by group
(scale 1-4: agree strongly 1; agree 2; disagree 3; disagree strongly 4)

a. Christian Religious Education	**Netherlands** Mean	**Britain** Mean	**France** Mean	**Germany** Mean
Majority	**2.32**	**2.15**	**2.80**	**1.57**
Ex-Yugo	2.25	2.27	2.30***	1.79
Pakistani	2.01***	1.86***	1.84***	1.67
Moroccan	2.00***	2.01	2.15***	1.85***
Turkish	2.29	2.05	2.07***	1.86***
"Muslim"	**2.14**	**2.05**	**2.09**	**1.79**
Majority/ Muslim Gap	**0.18**	**0.10**	**0.71**	**0.22**

b. Muslim Religious Education	**Netherlands** Mean	**Britain** Mean	**France** Mean	**Germany** Mean
Majority	**2.56**	**2.75**	**3.01**	**2.17**
Ex-Yugo	2.43	1.96***	2.41***	1.87***
Pakistani	2.07***	1.55***	1.66***	1.50***
Moroccan	2.02***	1.55***	1.84***	1.77***
Turkish	2.25***	1.72***	2.07***	1.70***
"Muslim"	**2.19**	**1.69**	**2.00**	**1.71**
Majority/ Muslim Gap	**0.37**	**1.06**	**1.01**	**0.46**

(Group significantly different from Majority at *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, *** $p < .001$ – Bonferroni pairwise comparison – shown only for subcategories of "Muslim" by family country of origin)

[i] The analysis draws from Statham (2016).

[ii] Funding support from the European Commission is gratefully acknowledged, reference: SSH-2007-3.1.1 grant 215863.

[iii] We conducted five (group: native; ex-Yugoslavian; Moroccan; Turkish; Pakistani) × two (gender: male; female) two-way analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, educational level and income, for each country. We include age, education, and income as covariates, and gender as an independent variable, to see whether our findings hold, regardless of age, whether people are better educated or not, or how much they earn, plus we examine whether gender matters. In ANCOVA the test of whether groups' means are the same is represented by the F-ratio and an associated significance value. A first general finding is that gender does not affect results, while group belonging matters a great deal in explaining variance. For this reason, we focus on group differences within the four countries, respectively. Our tables show the means adjusted for the effects of covariates and level of significance of Bonferonni-corrected pairwise comparisons of these means.